

Leelanau County Compliance Review July, 2005

At its December 2004 meeting, the Michigan Emergency Telephone Service Committee (ETSC) voted to extend compliance reviews of 9-1-1 expenditures to Michigan counties "by request." These reviews would be for expenditures of funds generated through the provisions of the amended 9-1-1 Act, PA 32 of 1986 (PA 32). These voluntary *by request* reviews must come through proper channels and require an affirmative vote of the ETSC to proceed. County 9-1-1 revenues include: wireless revenues distributed to counties through the State; revenues collected through county 9-1-1 surcharges on land line phones; and dispatcher training funds distributed to primary public safety answering points (PSAPs).

Also, at that same meeting, the ETSC Certification Subcommittee Chair recommended a *by request* review of Leelanau County. The request had been received from the Sheriff of Leelanau County as the dispatch operations were moving from a sheriff department-based central dispatch to an independent dispatch operation. The ETSC accepted the recommendation of the Certification Subcommittee.

Certification Subcommittee Chair William Charon named subcommittee members Gribler, Bawol, Miller-Brown, and himself to the Leelanau County Compliance Review Team. The years 2002, 2003, and 2004 were determined as the time period for the review.

A letter advising Leelanau County of its review was sent to Sheriff Michael Oltersdorf, the requestor of the review, and Tom Skowronski at Leelanau Central Dispatch. The letter requested the following information from Leelanau County:

- The Leelanau County 9-1-1 plan
- A copy of the proposed 2005 budget
- List of appropriate PSAP managers and their phone numbers
- Copies of budgetary reports or journals including the line items for 9-1-1 funds receipts for 2002, 2003, and 2004.
- Copy of indirect costs, if they are being charged to 9-1-1
- An outline of the organizational structure for the administration of 9-1-1
- Copy of wireless training funds, revenue journal entries and expenditures
- Name of a point of contact person

The requested information was received by the State 9-1-1 Administrator's Office in a timely and organized manner.

Background

Leelanau County 9-1-1 Central Dispatch (LCCD) acts as the consolidated dispatch service for Leelanau County and receives the entire 9-1-1 call volume for the geographical boundaries of the county. Up until November 9, 2004 the LCCD was operated and managed through the Leelanau County Sheriff Department (LCSD). The November 9, 2004 LCCD departmental transition made LCCD a separate county department. Under both LCSD and newly created LCCD department, operating policy and procedures are established through the Leelanau County Communication System 9-1-1 Advisory Board. At the time of the final on-site review written policies for operations, including a policy on dispatching the closest car to calls for service were in development. (Please refer to the recommendations below).

Leelanau County implemented Enhanced 9-1-1 in 1990. The county became Phase I wireless 9-1-1 compliant in 2002. Phase II wireless 9-1-1 was fully deployed with all carriers in June 2005. LCCD dispatches for 4 police departments, (including the sheriff department, troopers assigned to the county out of the Traverse City Post of the Michigan State Police, Suttons Bay Police Dept., and the Grand Traverse Band Law Enforcement [tribal police]), a county-wide emergency medical service (EMS), a county-wide fire department, and the National Park Service.

In 2004 LCCD received 2,513 land line 9-1-1 calls and 1,365 wireless 9-1-1 calls. In 2004 LCCD dispatched 3,878 incidents. LCCD employs ten (10) full-time dispatchers and one director, who also serves as the county's emergency management director. The director splits his time between Emergency Management and Central Dispatch, spending about 20 hours each week on the functions separately.

The dispatch center is a separate facility attached to the main building of the new sheriff department facility. LCCD began operations in the new facility on November 9th, 2005. The LCCD portion of the facility was built using landline 9-1-1 surcharge revenue and general capital. The dispatch center has its own secure entrance. Consisting of about 2,000 square feet, it houses the communications room, locker/restroom, equipment room, and break room. The 9-1-1 phone system is capable of taking Phase I and II wireless 9-1-1 calls. The phone system also interfaces with computerized dispatching (CAD) and mapping systems.

The land line 9-1-1 surcharge is collected by a combination of voter approval and county commission action. The current land line collection is \$2.12 monthly. The first 9-1-1 land line surcharge election was passed in 2002. Prior to that time, a 53-cent monthly surcharge was collected to supplement the county's general fund support of 9-1-1. Since the wireless 9-1-1 distributions began in 2000, Leelanau County has been certified by the ETSC as eligible to receive its portion of state wireless 9-1-1 funds.

Review Process

On March 15th, 2005, members of the Leelanau County compliance review team met via conference call (team members had received the copies of Leelanau County Financial Reports in advance of the meeting). Based on the documentation provided, the receipts of funds were clearly identifiable; however the system of fund expenditure needed further clarification. On April 15, 2005 Miller-Brown and Bawol met with members of Leelanau County.

Meeting with Director Tom Skowronski, County Treasurer Vicki Kilway, Carla Meyers-Robson (CPA for county accounting firm), and Chief Deputy Account Chelly Roush, in Suttons Bay on April 15th, 2005:

A query was made to the members of Leelanau County as to the method used for tracking, because in the preliminary review done by the team it was apparent that while receipting had been done, there appeared to be no separate accounting of the funds, with the exception of the incoming accounts and various transfers out. Ms. Kilway explained that there was a system of block transfers of the 9-1-1 funds to the General Fund. The initial documentation established that 9-1-1 funds (wireless and landline) were insufficient to cover the operational expenses of the 9-1-1 system and county general funds were a significant source of fiscal support to 9-1-1. However, there was not an itemized list of transfers separating the General Fund expenses for the restricted 9-1-1 sources.

Miller-Brown and Bawol explained to the representatives of the county the proper accounting protocol for the wireless, landline, and wireless training funds. The county was asked to make accounting adjustments and related summaries. These documents were sent to the State 9-1-1 Administrator's Office on June 14, 2004. On July 14, 2005 compliance review team members Bawol, Gribler, Charon, and Miller-Brown met with Leelanau County officials to review that documentation.

Meeting with Tom Skowronski and County Treasurer Vicki Kilway in Leland on July 14, 2005.

Ms. Kilway provided further clarification and documentation of the financial administration of Leelanau Central Dispatch. From 2001 to 2003 the General Fund absorbed the cost of the two full-time civilian dispatchers and the combined dispatch/corrections positions (which dispatched on a half-time basis). Wages and benefits for these personnel were borne by the county general fund (via the sheriff's department jail budget). The county general fund also absorbed the cost allocations for services and facilities of LCCD. The wireless fund was numbered 232 and the landline fund was 233

The transfers (noted below) from the 9-1-1 funds (232 and 233) to the general fund in 2002 through 2004 were reimbursement back to the general fund for a specific capital project for the 9-1-1 center equipment and radio upgrades (including dispatch computers, CAD, phone equipment, radio consoles, equipment infrastructure, and tower construction). The mapping system is also used by other departments within the county and each of

those departments paid its pro rata share. The projects and the costs were supported by the county's documentation.

Between 2002 and 2004 there were \$5,046 additional allowable expenditures [such as telephone programming, classified ads, EMD cardset support, and non-MCOLES training that were paid directly from 9-1-1 funds]. 9-1-1 funds not fully used in a given year remained in the 9-1-1 accounts and were carried over into the next year.

There was an informational mailing done by the county in regard to the 2002 ballot proposal. 9-1-1 landline funds were used for the printing and mailing of 14,000 informational flyers. The informational flyer contained no language that stated "Vote Yes for 9-1-1" (or any similar statement). However, it could have been construed by some citizens as being written in a manner favorable to the 9-1-1 ballot question. While the \$2,348 used for the mailing was not unreasonable in its price, the members of the county were advised that future 9-1-1 ballot informational mailings should be done through a privately funded campaign to avoid any possible question of this nature.

Transfers out of 9-1-1 funds to general fund included:

Communications/Capital Project

Wireless 9-1-1 Fund Transfers Out to General Fund:

11/26/02 \$ 20,000
12/31/02 \$ 50,000
10/14/03 \$ 35,000
04/20/04 \$ 25,000

Landline 9-1-1 Transfers Out of General Fund:

12/31/02 \$ 10,663.20
12/31/03 \$ 350,000
04/20/04 \$ 200,000

(Landline Transfer In 07/20/04 \$100,000 From Communications Project back into landline fund)

Mapping:

Payments made out of Wireless 9-1-1 Funds:

07/19/01 \$ 2,612.50 Land Information Access Assn (LIAA)
06/18/01 \$ 5,800 to LIAA
11/20/02 \$ 765 to LIAA

Payments made out of Landline 9-1-1 Funds:

08/29/02 \$ 6,000 to LIAA
04/30/03 \$ 1,477.50 LIAA

July 15 visit to LCCD dispatch center.

Dispatchers James Danek and Jessica Plamondon were on duty on the morning the compliance review team was at the center.

Dispatch staff has close access to restroom and a break area. There are usually two dispatchers on duty and three during busier times. Dispatchers enter warrants and personal protection orders (PPO's) into LEIN, but are not performing any non-dispatch related duties (e.g. report processing or jail functions). LCCD uses the Priority Dispatch System. However, pre-arrival instructions are not given in a consistent basis.

An automatic mutual aid dispatching system is in place for rescue and structure fires. The center has three full consoles. There is an extended-time recorder that logged radio and telephone phone transmissions. Each dispatcher also has access to short-term play-back at their consoles. Dispatchers did not go through a CTO or other documented (tracked) training program. The generator and UPS are monitored in the dispatch center, however, other than calling a technician in, there is no procedure in place for equipment failures. During the visit

to the center Mr. Skowronski explained that a policy and procedure manual for the new center had not been fully implemented.

Leelanau County Summary

9-1-1 Project Costs for 2002 = \$ 92,127

9-1-1 Project Costs for 2003 = \$ 385,000

9-1-1 Project Costs for 2004 = \$ 577,859

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2002 = \$ 76,064

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2003 = \$ 83,265

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2004 = \$ 88,529

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2002 = \$ 110,021

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2003 = \$ 406,716

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2004 = \$ 394,660

Wireless 9-1-1 Funds

Effective June 1, 2005 the wireless surcharge funds are remitted and maintained in a separate account (County Fund # 233). The wireless funds (combined with landline 9-1-1 funds) are for LCCD's budgeted operational costs. The annual LCCD operating budget for 2005 is \$654,243. These costs include: dispatching staff wages and benefits, office supplies, memberships and subscriptions directly related to 9-1-1, building and grounds expenses, and telephone costs. Costs of accounting and payroll/benefits administration is absorbed by the county general fund through its routine operations.

Landline 9-1-1 Surcharge Funds

Effective June 1, 2005 the landline surcharge funds are remitted and maintained in a separate account (County Fund # 232). The landline funds (combined with wireless 9-1-1 funds) are for LCCD's budgeted operational costs. The annual LCCD operating budget for 2005 is \$654,243. These costs include: dispatching staff wages and benefits, office supplies, memberships and subscriptions directly related to 9-1-1, building and grounds expenses, and telephone costs. Radio system maintenance is funded through funds generated by radio tower lease revenues. Costs of accounting and payroll/benefits administration are absorbed by the county general fund through its routine operations.

Training Funds

Training money was initially combined with the regular wireless 9-1-1 distributions; however, a separate account (County Fund # 234) was created in May of 2005 (effective June 1, 2005) for the training funds. The accumulated 9-1-1 training money was appropriately transferred to that account and past expenditures were accounted for in balance summaries. Documentation of the transfer and expenditures accounting were provided. All wireless training money received since that time has been receipted into Fund # 234. (During the time the training funds were maintained within the other wireless funds, the training funds were used accordance with the ETSC's guidelines).

The training fund application records on file with the ETSC indicate that Leelanau County properly represented the half-time dispatch status of its combined corrections/dispatch positions to qualify for the county's FTE numbers. The 2001 and 2002 training distributions have been used in full in accordance with the two-year plus year of receipt spend-down time limit established by the ETSC. LCCD was eligible for 2005 training fund distributions. At the time this report was completed, the 2003 funds had met the required spend-down, making LCCD eligible for 2006 training fund distribution.

Training Fund Distribution 2001 =\$ 1,857

Training Fund Distribution 2002 =\$ 2,552

Training Fund Distribution 2003 = \$ 5,538
Training Fund Distribution 2004 = \$ 2,310

Training Fund Expenditures 2001 =\$ 1,857
Training Fund Expenditures 2002 =\$ 1,298
Training Fund Expenditures 2003 =\$ 2,460
Training Fund Expenditures 2004 =\$ 3,766

Findings and Final Summary

The Leelanau County 9-1-1 Plan is current and is in compliance with P.A. 32. The 9-1-1 plan creates a 9-1-1 Policy and Procedure Board. That board consists of the sheriff, a representative of the Michigan State Police, an emergency medical services (EMS) representative, a firefighter, the county emergency management coordinator, a member of the county board of commissioners, a representative from the National Park Service, a representative from the Grand Traverse Band, and a county citizen at large. The 9-1-1 board meets on a monthly basis.

Necessary Corrective Action:

No necessary corrective action is needed. After the initial April 15th visit, the Leelanau County Treasurer's Office made the requisite accounting changes to establish separate funds for the wireless, landline, and ETSC wireless training funds. The accounting system now in place at Leelanau County properly keeps the 9-1-1 funds separate from other county funds, both at the revenue and expenditure side.

*Recommendations:**

- 1) A training program for new dispatchers should be developed and implemented. A program that provides documentation and uniformity will facilitate the dispatchers in providing consistent service to citizens' calls. A training program will also help reduce the county's exposure to liability.
- 2) The development of comprehensive policy and procedures. Like training, policy and procedures will facilitate the dispatchers' ability to provide consistent service to citizens' calls. A system of uniform policy and procedures will also help reduce the county's exposure to liability.

In closing, based upon the documentation requested, made available to, and reviewed by the committee, Leelanau County and its 9-1-1 operation are in full compliance with the requirements of PA 32, as amended.

Submitted By:

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Dale Gribler

John Bawol

Harriet Miller-Brown

January 2006

* On July 29, 2005 – Mr. Skowronski notified Ms. Miller-Brown that the following policy and procedures were in development:

- Equipment Failure Protocol
- EMD Policy
- Resolution Center Failure
- CTO (Training) Program
- Closest Car Policy